MR. TRUDEAU COMES TO LONDON

THE LIBERAL PARTY CAMPAIGN TRAIL WINDS TO THE FOREST CITY NEXT MONTH PAGE 3

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Tuesday, January 15, 2013

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Don't cut too deep: Londoners

Public budget meeting. Many residents say they're not willing to pay expected price of another tax freeze

ANGELA MULLINS
angela.mullins@metronews.ca

Budget at a glance

- City staff have tabled a 2013 budget that recommends a 2.5 per cent tax increase, $59 a year more for the average homeowner.
- $11.5 million must be cut from the proposal to avoid a tax increase.

Please don't swing the axe.

That was the main message on Monday as Londoners weighed in on cuts that could come with a 2013 tax freeze.

"The vast majority of cuts will hit many Londoners hard," said Stephen Turner, past president of the Urban League of London.

The road to zero, he said, will cause "irreparable harm to the city."

One by one, about 15 people took the floor at city hall to tell councillors what cuts would mean for various sectors.

Most of the speakers opposed many of the roughly $8 million in cuts staff proposed as part of a budget recommendation tabled last month. The cuts — considered just a starting point toward a third consecutive tax freeze — would have a long-lasting, broad-ranging impact, they said.

The proposed elimination of a capital-grants program, for example, would stifle non-profits' ability to leverage investments from other levels of government. Those investments have allowed many groups to buy land and renovate buildings, Michelle Baldwin, executive director of the Pillar Nonprofit Network, told councillors.

Much the same is true for a proposal to put $1 million less into a reserve fund for affordable housing, which Baldwin said would have a "severe and immediate impact" on moving people out of shelters and into homes.

"We urge you to consider the impact your decisions will have on each and every constituent you represent from all socio-economic backgrounds," she said.

Cutting the program aimed at fighting the emerald ash borer would all but deforest the Forest City, one person said.

Several groups urged politicians to spare the transit commission and the library. Council has proposed no increases to their budgets, something leaders of both have said will mean cuts ranging from eliminating bus routes to slashing library hours.

Many of the proposed cuts are just plain "mean," Tanya Park, president of the SoHo Community Association, told councillors.

"Zero is not viable for another year," she said. "The service cuts and budget cuts proposed are ones that Londoners simply cannot afford."

Follow Angela Mullins on Twitter @MetroAngela

From left, Martha Powell, president and CEO of the London Community Foundation, Michelle Baldwin, executive director of the Pillar Nonprofit Network, and Andrew Lockie, CEO of the United Way of London and Middlesex, address how proposed city budget cuts would affect the non-profit sector during a Monday budget meeting. About 80 people packed council chambers to comment on the spending plan. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

A day in the Leafs

Well, two days, actually. U of W Mustangs goalie Josh Unice heads to Toronto to take part in a two-day Maple Leafs training camp PAGE 4

Atleo takes medical leave

The First Nations national chief is ordered by his doctor to take a brief break in the midst of a leadership crisis PAGE 5

12-step money makeover

We know how hard it is to try to overhaul your finances all at once. But keeping just one vow a month can turn you into a financial wizard PAGE 13

Armstrong tells all

Lance Armstrong has confessed to Oprah Winfrey that he engaged in doping to win the Tour de France, sources say PAGE 14

The NHL is Back! Lets Party!

JOIN US FOR A

FREE SKATE

AT BUDWEISER GARDENS
JANUARY 19TH 3-5PM

We're just as excited about hockey as you are London; so much so we're throwing a party!!! Saturday January 19th, join us from 3-5pm at Budweiser Gardens for our Celebrate Hockey Bash. There will be a **FREE** family Skate, door prizes and more!

Participants will enter through Gate 4 and everyone under 16 years of age is REQUIRED to wear a hockey helmet.

Its the "Lets Celebrate Hockey Together" brought to you by Oxford Learning Centre, Metro and 98.1 Free FM!

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98.1 free FM.ca

Centralized wait list

London, county streamline child-care info

The City of London and the County of Middlesex now has a centralized waiting list for licensed child care, school-age care and nursery school spaces.

This new wait list offers the benefit of one-time application and eliminates the need for parents to contact multiple child-care providers.

The list is accessible through the familyinfo.ca website. METRO

Volunteer opportunities

Police auxiliary section seeks recruits

The London Police Service auxiliary section offers volunteer opportunities for citizens. Auxiliary police members assist the London Police Service with parades, police displays and crime-prevention programs.

For more information and applications, visit police.london.ca, email shartwick@police.london.ca, or call 519-661-5982. METRO

Marketing. Council to vote on Canada's London pitch

You may see Canada's London all over the city if a new marketing plan receives approval from city council on Tuesday.

A $200,000 proposal to freshen up London's image ahead of the world figure skating championships will be up for consideration at the full council meeting.

The campaign calls for a series of ads featuring logos and the slogan "Canada's London" that will be plastered on bus shelters, banners and billboards. The marketing plan also calls for on-air and online advertisements. The pitch's supporters say they want London to leave a lasting impression on the millions of people watching the skating competition around the world.

They hope to encourage tourism and business by presenting strong branding.

AM980/AM980.CA

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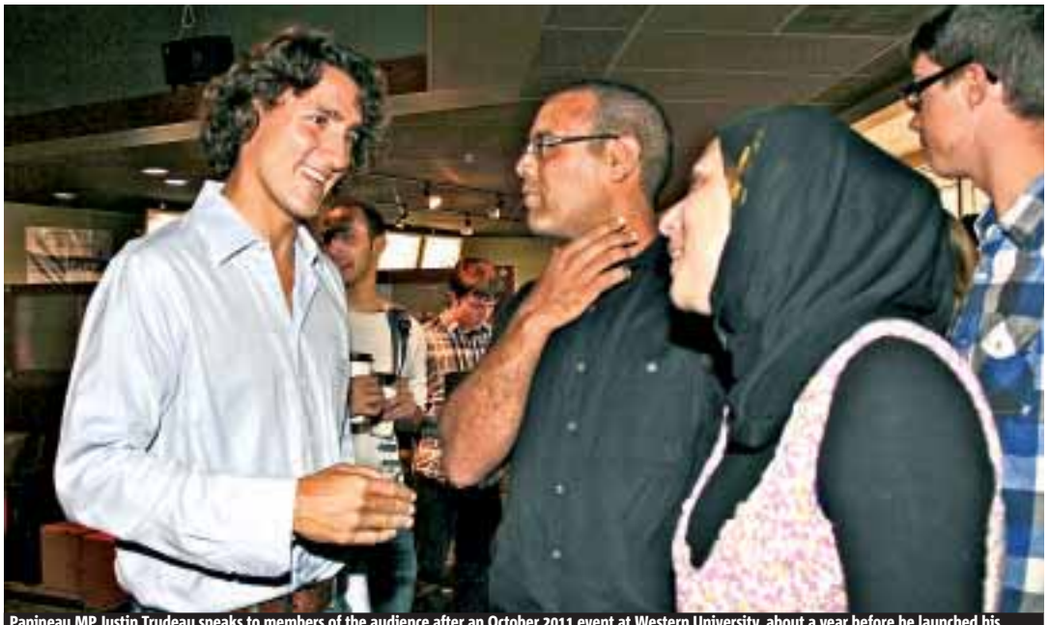

Papineau MP Justin Trudeau speaks to members of the audience after an October 2011 event at Western University, about a year before he launched his campaign to lead the federal Liberals. Trudeau's campaign is expected to stop in London next month. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Trudeau planning to land in London

Liberal. Leadership campaign stop will include Q and A hosted by Emerging Leaders

ANGELA MULLINS
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Liberal leadership contender Justin Trudeau will be in the Forest City on Feb. 6 — giving a speech and answering questions during a forum sponsored by Emerging Leaders.

The non-profit has extended a speaking invitation to all candidates in provincial and federal leadership contests, executive director Sean Quigley told Metro.

So far, Trudeau is the first one to bite.

"We wanted our members to hear what he has to say about the leadership for the Liberal party and what his plans are for the country," Quigley said. "An engaged, informed electorate helps to create great decisions and great input."

Officials with Trudeau's campaign couldn't confirm the visit.

Nearly half of the 80 tickets available for the Emerging Leaders' forum were claimed within a few hours of an announcement on Twitter.

Members of the group — aimed at attracting and tapping the talents of 20- to 44-year-olds — are being given first dibs, Quigley said. More tickets may be made available at a later date.

Trudeau, one of the first people in the now nine-way race to replace interim party leader Bob Rae, was talking to university students Monday in Quebec.

The Papineau MP is considered the front-runner, raising almost $600,000 during the first three months of his campaign, according to reports from The Canadian Press. The total includes $125,000 donated in the final days of 2012 alone.

Sunday was the entry deadline, with nine candidates expected to take the stage for the first debate Jan. 20 in Vancouver. An April 14 party-wide vote will determine the winner.

At a glance

- Emerging Leaders' forum featuring federal Liberal leadership candidate Justin Trudeau starts at 4 p.m. Feb. 6 at UpFront at the Market (130 King St.).
- Details at emergingleaders.ca/events.

False alarm. Suspicious-person search called off after police discover victim statement was 'misinterpreted'

In an odd turn of events over the weekend, London police called off a suspicious-person search after getting the wrong idea from a child's statement.

London police, through a media release sent around 11 p.m. on Saturday, notified the public that a seven-year-old boy had been asked to board a stranger's vehicle in a southeast London neighbourhood.

According to the release, the driver, who supposedly told the boy he was a friend of the family, offered candy and money to entice him into the car. A description of the alleged incident followed, including specific details such as the suspect's hat colour and number of doors on the vehicle.

CONTRIBUTED

About 20 hours later, police retracted the information in a subsequent release, saying "the attempted abduction did not occur."

"Parts of it weren't true," London police Const. Charlene Humble said of the child's story. "It was misinterpreted. The interaction was not the same as initially alleged. There was no luring."

Humble could neither confirm nor deny which components of the child's story were false.

When the original release was sent out, detectives from the Child & Youth and Sexual Assault Unit, a group of officers specially trained to interview children, had not spoken to the alleged victim. After they did, it was discovered there was no attempted abduction.

When dealing with child luring, police can never be too careful, Humble says.

"Obviously it's unfortunate," she said. "But at the end of the day, if it brings to light another opportunity for parents to speak to their kids about the dangers of talking to strangers, staying away from vehicles unknown to them — that sort of thing — (then it's a positive)."

JOHN MATISZ/METRO

Police investigation

Parkhill man faces child-porn charges

An undercover online investigation has led to child-porn charges against Robert Jamie Smith, 44. On Jan. 10, police searched a Parkhill residence, seizing several computer systems containing images of child sexual abuse. METRO

Festive RIDE

Impaired-driving numbers up

The results are in for Middlesex County OPP's 2012 Festive RIDE campaign. Middlesex OPP charged 16 people with impaired driving. The 2011 Festive RIDE saw 13 impaired-driving charges. METRO

Suspended licence

T.O. driver nabbed in traffic stop

A 26-year-old Toronto man has been charged with driving with a suspended licence after a traffic stop in Middlesex Centre. OPP conducted the stop Friday. Kelly Nisbet is scheduled to appear in a London court Feb. 1. METRO

1-800-222-8477 (TIPS)

OPP investigate break-in attempt

Middlesex OPP are looking for a suspect after a man attempted to kick in the front door of a Ilderton residence early Saturday. The Margaret Street homeowner saw a male suspect leave in a waiting Volkswagen. METRO

Eight-week sessions

Volleyball club has programs for kids

The London Volleyball Club is hosting an eight-week program for children in grades 5 and 6 (cost: $100) and an eight-week program for kids aged five to nine (cost: $55). Both programs begin Jan. 20. To learn more, visit lvcfire.com. METRO

St. Thomas

Former agriculture minister laid to rest

Former federal agriculture minister John Wise was remembered at a funeral in St. Thomas on Monday. He died last week at the age of 77. Wise was elected from Elgin to the House of Commons five times from 1972 to 1984. AM980/AM980.CA

Western U goalie calls invitation to Leafs training camp 'humbling'

'Out of the blue.' Opportunity to share ice with NHL all-stars has been cool, Mustangs player says

Josh Unice, a once highly sought-after prospect who currently plays goal for the Western University Mustangs hockey club, is in the midst of a two-day stint at Toronto Maple Leafs training camp.

"It's very humbling," Unice, 23, said. "At the same time, it's a great honour. They could have called in some high-school kids, or pretty much anybody."

After turning away 24 of 26 shots in a match versus the University of Ontario Institute of Technology on Saturday, Unice was told to call Reid Mitchell. Toronto's director of hockey and scouting administration informed him the team needed an extra goalie for its abbreviated training camp.

Although the opportunity came "out of the blue," the 2007 third-round draft pick of the Chicago Blackhawks couldn't let it pass him by.

Josh Unice's week of hockey

- **Monday:** Toronto Maple Leafs camp
- **Tuesday:** Toronto Maple Leafs camp
- **Thursday:** Western game versus Laurier
- **Saturday:** Western game versus Guelph

Josh Unice
CONTRIBUTED

"It's been cool, just kind of the fact that it is the Toronto Maple Leafs," he said on the phone from Toronto. "I've been to Chicago and Atlanta, but the following here is definitely a lot bigger."

He's sharing the ice with the likes of Phil Kessel and Dion Phaneuf, both NHL all-stars, Monday and Tuesday. At different points in his hockey career, Unice has played with three players — James van Riemsdyk, Nazem Kadri and Jake Gardiner — attending the pre-season camp.

Unice suited up for 92 Ontario Hockey League games from 2007 to 2010, splitting time with the Kitchener Rangers and Windsor Spitfires. He owns a Memorial Cup ring from his time with the 2009 Spitfires.

Over three-plus season in the Ontario university circuit, Unice has put together an impressive 39-14-0-6 record. The Mustangs, ranked third in the country and first in the province, are on a 15-game winning streak.

The Holland, Ohio, native says he's open to playing a fifth year at Western, although that decision ultimately falls on the shoulders of the coaching staff.

"I like it in Canada, to be honest," he said, when asked if he'll be moving back to the U.S. when his Mustangs career ends. "But, then again, I'd like to go to law school, too. So I'm trying to take it one step at a time."

JOHN MATISZ/METRO

Downtown storefront gets a reno

On Monday afternoon, a construction worker takes a break atop the frame of a pedestrian shelter located at the corner of Richmond and Oxford streets. The storefront is being renovated to house an Urban Outfitters clothing retail store, which is expected to open in the spring. The 10,000-square-foot Richmond Row spot was previously occupied by Blockbuster Video. JOHN MATISZ/METRO

Concussed hockey players are returning to action too early, medical study finds

Western University Canada

Hockey players are suiting up too soon after being concussed, according to a recent medical study published in the Journal of Neuroscience.

A key mind behind the work, Andrew Johnson, an associate professor in the health sciences school at Western University, says hockey appears to have an immediacy complex when it comes to dealing with throwing concussed players back onto the ice.

"We found that there is a general resistance towards limiting the playing time of concussed athletes," Johnson said, "even when the concussion has been diagnosed by a physician."

The study tracked the health of 25 male and 20 female university players during the 2011-12 season.

A total of 11 concussions were recorded over a 55-game period. Of these instances, 67 per cent were considered hits to the head, while 83 per cent were described as "purposeful."

This empirical evidence is alarming to Johnson, as it provides more questions than answers. Educating the right people about appropriate return-to-play guidelines is a good first step towards correcting the culture, he says.

JOHN MATISZ/METRO

Quoted

"The most likely avenue for improvement is in the attitudes of players, coaches and parents towards concussions in general, and towards return-to-play guidelines in the specific. We also need to eliminate fighting."

Andrew Johnson, Western University associate professor, on tackling the issue of concussions in hockey.

First Nations national chief out sick amid political crisis

Shawn Atleo. Leader has endured intense meetings, media scrutiny and criticism from other chiefs

A sudden medical leave announced Monday by the head of Canada's largest aboriginal organization will delay — but not derail — pivotal talks between First Nations and Stephen Harper, says Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan.

"No one has got certainty for when the national chief will return, but I took it that it would be at least two weeks away," Duncan said. "But we were thinking ... it would be at least that long before any further meeting got underway."

In an interview with The Canadian Press, Duncan said there's little hope a one-on-one meeting between Harper and Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo can still take place by Jan. 24 — a date floated during their contentious meetings last week.

Atleo announced Monday that his doctor has ordered him to take a "brief" sick leave despite the AFN being in the midst of a crisis, with some chiefs and First Nations citizens questioning the group's authority.

Atleo came down with the flu before Christmas and never had a chance to beat it, said Jody Wilson-Raybould, the regional chief for British Columbia.

In a statement, Atleo said the trials of the past two weeks simply caught up with him.

He has been the target of much criticism for agreeing to meet with Prime Minister Stephen Harper last week.

Atleo managed to pull together a consensus on topics for future discussion. But he was not able to persuade Harper to have Gov. Gen. David Johnston attend — a key demand of a faction of chiefs, including fasting Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence.

Several leading chiefs said the assembly should have refused the meeting because it didn't take place on their terms and on their turf. Chiefs from several provinces and territories boycotted the meeting and instead protested outside the Prime Minister's Office.

Atleo's absence will leave a big, if temporary, vacuum in Crown-First Nations politics.

Atleo was re-elected last summer for his second three-year term. He won solid backing despite his opponents saying that he was too cosy with the federal government.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Shawn Atleo is taking a "brief" leave from his job as head of the Assembly of First Nations, under doctor's orders. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bad timing

"I regret to have to tell you that those long days have caught up with me."

Shawn Atleo, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations

Ashley Smith. Second inquest into prison death of teenager opens at last

The inquest into the death of a teenager who choked while prison guards videotaped but did not intervene will serve as a memorial to her, the presiding coroner said Monday.

As the long-awaited probe finally opened, Dr. John Carlisle told jurors the death of Ashley Smith was a tragedy that must inform the future.

"We cannot now reverse the course of history," Carlisle told the five-woman jury.

"This is the best memorial we can give to Ashley."

Smith, 19, of Moncton, N.B., died in October 2007 in her segregation cell at Kitchener's Grand Valley Institution, which jurors will tour on Thursday.

In an agreed statement of facts, court heard the teen died after tying ligatures around her neck while guards — ordered not to enter her cell if she was breathing — watched and videotaped.

Jurors will view the "most disturbing" video because "it provides an accurate account of what happened," said Jocelyn Speyer, coroner's counsel.

About 8,000 pages of information will be presented to jury, and it will take "stamina and perseverance" to tell and listen to Smith's story, Speyer said.

In all, about 100 witnesses are expected to testify at the webcast inquest, which could last as long as a year.

Jurors heard how Smith had spent much of her last year in segregation, shunted across the country from prison to prison even as her mental health deteriorated.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

First witness

Monday's only witness, a manager from Correctional Services, said she didn't know if there were any mechanisms to flag Smith's ballooning sentence.

- Smith's string of in-custody offences over the years added new criminal convictions and more time behind bars.
- By the time she died, a 45-day sentence had grown to 2,239 days — more than six years.

Parents take hold of Sandy Hook Promise

Jimmy Greene, left, kisses his wife, Nelba Marquez-Greene, as he holds a portrait of their daughter, Sandy Hook School shooting victim Ana Marquez-Greene, formerly of Winnipeg, at a news conference in Newtown, Conn., on Monday. One month after the mass shooting, the parents joined a grassroots initiative unveiled Monday, called Sandy Hook Promise, that supports solutions for a safer community. JESSICA HILL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ottawa war museum

Veteran vandalism brings charges

Two men are facing charges in vandalism at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa this past summer.

Police say the pair spray-painted a swastika and an offensive message on a Royal Canadian Air Force plane on Aug. 27.

Police have charged Joel Lendore and Simon Los, both 22. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mali, West Africa

Canadian plane on anti-terror run

Canada is sending one of its C-17 military cargo planes to deliver supplies to the capital of Mali after a request from France.

An al-Qaida-linked group has seized the northern part of Mali and is advancing south.

The C-17 has been committed for only a week.

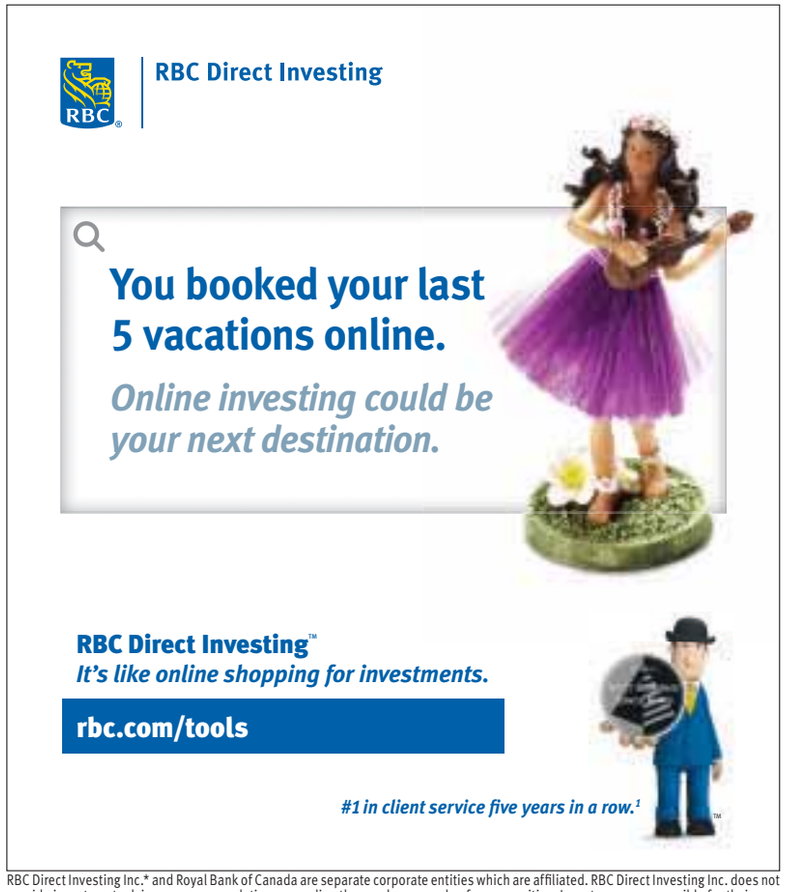
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Supreme Court

Human-smuggling law nixed in B.C.

Canada's human-smuggling law has been struck down by the British Columbia Supreme Court.

Justice Arne Silverman found a section of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act "unnecessarily broad," saying it could lead to the prosecution of humanitarian workers. THE CANADIAN PRESS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Not guilty ruling 'vindication' for ex-Nortel brass

Fraud trial. Judge says he's not convinced that executives 'deliberately misrepresented' finances at telecom company

The former top executives at Nortel Networks said they finally got "vindication" Monday after being found not guilty of fraud, nearly a decade after being accused of manipulating financial records at the fallen Canadian technology giant.

Ontario Superior Court Justice Frank Marrocco acquitted ex-CEO Frank Dunn, ex-CFO Douglas Beatty and ex-controller Michael Gollogly because he was "not satisfied" the evidence showed the men had "deliberately misrepresented" the finances at the now-defunct telecom company in 2002 and 2003. "The criminal trial is based on evidence," he told a Toronto courtroom. "The decision I make is based on that evidence and nothing else."

Following the not guilty verdicts, the former executives jumped to their feet to hug family members and their lawyers.

Marrocco's 145-page ruling concludes one of the largest and most complex trials in Canadian corporate history.

Dunn, Beatty and Gollogly each had faced two counts of fraud — one count of defrauding the public and one count of defrauding Nortel Networks Corp.

The Crown had alleged that the men participated in a book-cooking scheme designed to trigger $12.8 million in bonuses and stocks for themselves while they were at the helm of Nortel. They were fired from the beleaguered firm in 2004. All three had pleaded not guilty to the charges.

In a statement, Dunn, the former head of Nortel, said he was "grateful to have received vindication." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 101.65¢ (+0.07¢)

TSX 12,603.09 (+0.91)

OIL $94.14 US (+58¢)

GOLD $1,669.40 US (+$8.80)

Natural gas: $3.38 US (+5¢)
Dow Jones: 13,507.32 (+18.89)

A skyscraper, a cauldron and a ketchup bottle: London museum unveils design-prize finalists

Newly built tower The Shard, right, looms over central London in this July photo. The tower, which at 310 metres high is Britain's tallest building, has been nominated for a major design award along with the 2012 Olympic cauldron and a non-stick ketchup bottle. On Monday, London's Design Museum announced contenders for its Designs of the Year prizes in seven categories including architecture, fashion, transport and digital media. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Coca-Cola tackles obesity debate for first time in U.S. ad campaign

Coca-Cola became one of the world's most powerful brands by equating its soft drinks with happiness. Now, for the first time, it's addressing a growing cloud over the industry: Obesity.

The U.S.-based company on Monday will begin airing a two-minute ad during the highest-rated shows on CNN, Fox News and MSNBC in hopes of becoming a stronger voice in the debate over sodas and their impact on public health. The ad lays out Coca-Cola's record of providing drinks with fewer calories over the years and notes that weight gain is the result of consuming too many calories of any kind — not just soda.

Coca-Cola says the campaign will kick off a variety of moves that help address obesity in the year ahead, such as providing more diet options at soda fountains.

For the world's No. 1 beverage company, the ads reflect the mounting pressures on the broader industry. Later this year, New York City is set to put into effect a first-in-the-nation cap on the size of soft drinks sold at restaurants, movie theatres, sports arenas and other venues.

Recent studies have suggested that sugary drinks cause people to gain weight, independent of other unhealthy behaviour. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Waning demand?

Apple cutting back on iPhone 5 parts orders, report says

Apple shares fell in premarket trading Monday after The Wall Street Journal reported that the company has cut its orders for iPhone 5 components due to weaker-than-expected demand.

The newspaper said that two people it did not identify by name told it that Apple's first-quarter orders for iPhone 5 screens have dropped to about half of what the company had previously planned to order.

It said one of the people told the newspaper that the company has also cut orders for components other than screens. The Journal said it was told Apple notified the suppliers of the order cut last month. Apple didn't immediately return an email seeking comment.

The move is a sign that sales of the new iPhone haven't been as strong as previously expected. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WHAT WORKOUT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

SHE SAYS...
Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

We're two weeks into the new year and I'm sure many of you have resolved that 2013 is the year you're going to get fit. And hey, if you've actually managed to stick with it so far, then good for you!

But with so many exercise-themed daily deals showing up in your email inbox every morning, it can be hard to know where to begin. Consider this a Coles Notes guide to some of the different workout options available to all those determined resolution-makers out there.

1. **Spinning.** There's nothing quite like cycling away your sins for 45 minutes on a stationary bike in a dark room surrounded by sweaty bodies and loud music thumping in your ears. It's kind of like burning calories in a nightclub except you're pedalling instead of grinding and that water you're chugging doesn't have any vodka in it.

New year, new workout

While there are many different varieties of yoga, they all involve contorting and holding your body in a sequence of postures that will test your endurance and flexibility. Before you hit the mat, recognize that you'll have to be able to take yourself seriously while posing like a tree.

2. **CrossFit.** Once the preferred exercise regime of military personnel and Olympic athletes, CrossFit is now developing a cult-like following among the civilian masses. The high-intensity fitness program emphasizes heavy weightlifting, gruelling cardio and a secret language designed to confuse outsiders. But if you can wrap your head around WODs and AMRAPs, then join a Box and start working on your Fran time.

3. **Yoga.** There's nothing new about this ancient practice that combines strength- and stamina-building poses with meditative breathing exercises. While there are many different varieties of yoga, they all involve contorting and holding your body in a sequence of postures that will test your endurance and flexibility. Before you hit the mat, recognize that you'll have to be able to take yourself seriously while posing like a tree.

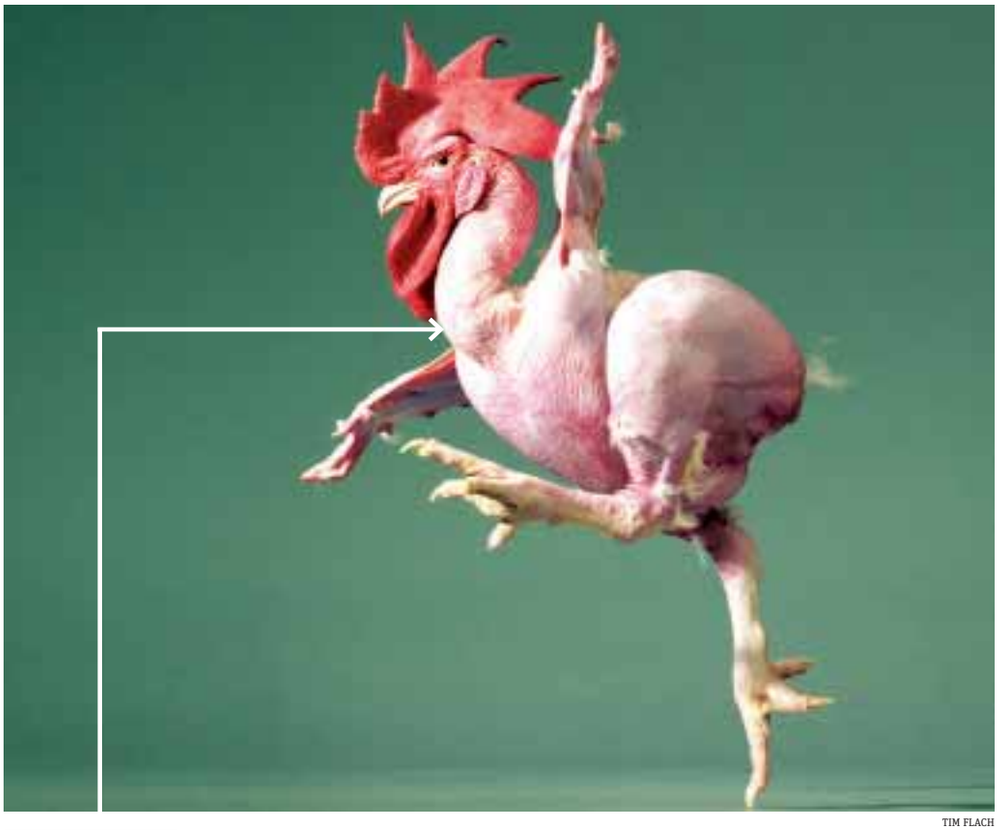
4. **Ballet Barre Workout.** If you've ever dreamed about a long, lean dancer's physique, then a ballet-inspired fitness class is a good place to start. You might feel a little more Ugly Duckling than Black Swan as you attempt to plié while performing bicep curls with a weighted ball, but stick with it long enough and you'll end up toned and sculpted and maybe even a little more graceful.

5. **Running.** What's not to love about running? It helps to improve both physical and mental health, it's cheap (once you've invested in a decent pair of shoes), and since it's a solo endeavour you can avoid all of those annoying January Joiners that tend to crowd up other workout classes at this time of year. Pounding the pavement is best experienced when there is actual pavement involved, so forget treadmills that do half the work for you and head outside.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

LPGA player In-Kyung Kim, right, poses in a yoga position in San Diego. Before you ditch your new year's resolutions, consider your options.
EVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

This will ruffle some feathers



TIM FLACH

Cock-a-doodle-doo

Animals' human side laid bare

You may think this rooster has just been plucked but for considerable economic, and potentially environmental, benefits, it has been specially bred by humans to be featherless. In his new book, More Than Human, British photographer Tim Flach explores the striking relationships and similarities between humans and animals. METRO

Q and A

The skin-ny on this yardbird

TIM FLACH
Photographer

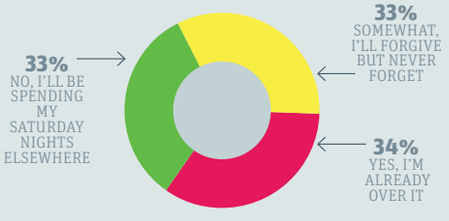
Your book More Than Human looks at intimate portraits of animals. What is the main idea behind it?
Through my photos, I want to spark a debate and raise questions on how we, human beings, shape nature, and conversely how it shapes us. In this regard, I want my photos to go beyond being pretty.

So you invite us to think about how we perceive animals?
Yes, precisely. Let's take the featherless chicken, one of my favourite images from the book. It's bred by Prof. Avigdor Cahaner of Hebrew University of Jerusalem, drawing on a naturally occurring recessive mutation that eliminates feathers. The bird doesn't need to be plucked, which saves money in processing. It provokes a discussion on how we know the animal: In supermarkets, we see them dead, wrapped in cling film. METRO

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Are you willing to forgive the NHL for the lockout?



Twitter

@eyecarlly: time to sign up for open mic night!!! head over to the biz booth to do it. LET'S GOOO. #fsu #fanshawe

@RamblesOfALady: Why is G building so cold? #Fanshawe

@MGirash: 2 university-aged kids away at school; 1 will go next year. What will bring them back to #LDNont ? Good jobs in a progressive city w/ heart.

@RachFee: FYI guys - Forest City Surplus just informed me by email that they have life-sized cut outs of Justin Bieber. In case you wanted one.

@BigVikingGames: EXCITING NEWS! We are pleased to welcome new viking @tgwozdz to our team today! #ldnont #BigVikingGames

metro

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DVD review

Taken 2

Director. Olivier Megaton

Stars. Liam Neeson, Famke Janssen, Maggie Grace

People will call this a quick-buck sequel to Taken, the surprise hit of 2009, and these people are absolutely correct. Directed by Pierre Morel, Taken took in $225 million in worldwide box office on an investment of $25 million. No surprise then that unsubtle producer/writer Luc Besson decided to hit up the cash register a second time, hiring director Olivier Megaton for the outing.
And the first thing to be kidnapped in Taken 2 is logic. Despite a ludicrous script by Besson and co-writer Robert Mark Kamen, Liam Neeson manages to keep a straight face while reprising his role of avenging ex-CIA dad Bryan Mills. In the first Taken, Mills had to rescue his teenage daughter from Albanian sex traffickers. In Taken 2, it is Mills and his lovely ex-wife, Lenore (Famke Janssen), who are kidnapped. At age 60, Neeson still has formidable action chops and heroic form, and manages to propel the film through a sequel so silly that it seems like a Mad magazine parody of the original.

PETER HOWELL

American Idol judges Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj both claim they are now getting along. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Idol judges won't sing about feud rumours

Putting it in the past. Judges Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj are vague on differences, but agree they wouldn't aim to be Idols

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

You might have heard that new American Idol judges Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj haven't exactly been getting along. That they've been "feuding," even. Well, Carey and Minaj have heard it, too, and they're bored by the reports. "This is a very passionate panel. I think there are a lot of strong personalities," Carey says. "Starting this process, I felt like it was a possibility that there could be differences of opinions. The fighting is what it is. This is American Idol. It's bigger than all that. It's bigger than some stupid, trumped-up thing."

While talk of discord might make for good gossip reporting, it's not good for the show itself, Carey explains. "The whole thing is convoluted," she says. "It's a distraction from the show. It's a distraction to the contestants, and I think it's unfair to them. It should be about the contestants."

But how are the two getting along now? Carey insists that "time heals all wounds" and that the whole disagreement "was sort of one-sided," a contention with which Minaj begs to differ. When asked what they did to put an end to any feuding, Minaj goes for a joking response, saying, "I put out a sex tape." But Carey is much more blunt: "I did nothing, and here we are."

Feud or no feud, the new judges can at least agree on one thing: Neither of them would've tried out for Idol themselves had it been an option. "I personally would never have wanted to do this type of show — no offence to the show at all, but I've said that since I first heard about the show," Carey says.

"I had to learn in front of the world how to just be and be on TV and sing. It's sort of like what these kids do, only at that time it was like the Arsenio Hall Show, and that would be like, 'Here I am!' It was very tough."

For Minaj, her reticence to be a contestant goes beyond just herself. "I definitely don't think a rapper should be in this competition. Rap and hip-hop are completely different from American Idol," she explains.

"With singing, people do not care what you've necessarily gone through. If it's a great song, they're going to love it. I would never go on a show like this as a rapper, and I wouldn't encourage anyone else to come on as a rapper. I don't think it's authentic and I think if you really look for people to believe you and see you as an authentic rapper, you wouldn't do it. It's definitely not a rap competition."

CBS boss struts the network's stuff

CBS Entertainment President Nina Tassler came out swinging with big numbers to bolster her claim that it is "once again America's most-watched network" at the Winter Television Critics Association Tour. At the same time, though, Tassler stressed a need to rejig how viewership is measured given the increase in viewers tuning in online, on mobile devices or on DVRs. "It has been a tipping point this season with viewers watching on other platforms," said Tassler. "Audience measurement hasn't quite caught up with the speed of change in viewer behaviour.

"We have four of the top five comedies, the top seven dramas, 17 of the top 30 shows overall," Tassler touted. As for those non-traditional viewers, freshman series Elementary is particularly instructive, Tassler explained. "It is the most-watched new show of the season, but only 59 per cent of its viewing is live," she said. "Across all platforms, the total audience of Elementary is more than the comparable freshman-year ratings for such hits as NCIS and CSI."

Tassler also addressed the future of two of CBS's biggest comedies, Two and a Half Men and How I Met Your Mother, the latter of which seems to be on the verge of renewal for a ninth season. "I will be happy to report in a very few days, I believe, that things will be resolved," Tassler said. "We are very confident and excited that things will all work out. Almost everything is completed." And another season of Two and a Half Men would surprise no one, though Tassler admitted Ashton Kutcher's contract has not yet been renewed. "We've told Warner Bros. we would like to have an 11th season, and they're equally interested, so stay tuned," she said. As for Angus T. Jones, who infamously urged fans to not watch the show during a video interview late last year, Tassler says a reconciliation with the show and the network is well under way.

Looking ahead, Tassler touted the summer debut of Under the Dome, based on Stephen King's novel and produced by Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment. The series begins filming next month and premieres June 24.

There were some topics Tassler clearly didn't want to discuss, though, offering terse answers to questions about the network's response to the Aurora, Colo., and Newtown, Conn., shootings as well as Jennifer Esposito's acrimonious exit from Blue Bloods, ending several remarks with a terse, "Next question." NED EHRBAR, MWN

Angus T. Jones is making peace with CBS. GETTY IMAGES

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Demi Moore ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Gimme, gimme Moore: Demi diving into another high-profile relationship

Demi Moore's fledgling romance with 31-year-old restauranteur Harry Morton is reportedly heating up, according to E! News. "They have been trying to keep it a secret," a source says. "It's not a serious thing, but it may develop into something. They have a lot of fun together and have been meeting in secret places in New York and Los Angeles." The pair was recently spotted dining out in Beverly Hills and have reportedly spent several nights together at Moore's home. Morton famously dated Lindsay Lohan in 2006 and has also been linked to Jennifer Aniston.

Jennifer Lawrence

Lawrence lets go of long-term beau

Jennifer Lawrence is now a Golden-Globe-winning actress, but she'll be celebrating solo, as Lawrence and X-Men: First Class co-star Nicholas Hoult have reportedly called it quits, according to Us Weekly. The young stars met on the set of the superhero film and dated for two years. The split comes as a surprise, as Lawrence was singing Hoult's praises recently to Elle magazine. "He is honestly my best friend, and hopefully I'm his best friend, too," she told the magazine. "He's my favourite person to be around and he makes me laugh harder than anybody."

The Word

Jodie Foster's Golden Globes speech decoded

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Jodie Foster, who received the Cecil B. Demille Award for her 47-year-long career in Hollywood, offered an acceptance speech that has left audiences and critics baffled, outraged and inspired in equal measure.

The overall message was unclear. Was she officially coming out? Did she announce her retirement from acting and directing? What does she have against Honey Boo Boo? It didn't help matters that the audio cut out at a crucial moment as she discussed "a big coming out speech." So what did the six-and-a-half-minute ramble actually mean? We set out to decode it:

"I guess I have a sudden urge to say something that I've never really been able to air in public. So, a declaration that I'm a little nervous about but maybe not quite as nervous as my publicist right now, huh Jennifer? But I'm just going to put it out there, right? Loud and proud, right? So I'm going to need your support on this. I am single. Yes I am, I am single. No, I'm kidding, but I'm not really kidding."

TRANSLATION: I recognize your hunger for a big confessional moment from me, and for that I am going to mess with you.

"Now I'm told, apparently, that every celebrity is expected to honour the details of their private life with a press conference, a fragrance and a prime-time reality show. You know, you guys might be surprised, but I am not Honey Boo Boo Child. No, I'm sorry, that's just not me. It never was and it never will be."

TRANSLATION: I am going to equate being upfront about your sexuality with the more tasteless and tacky aspects of our reality TV culture, no matter how damaging it may be for young gays and lesbians to see a successful public figure refuse to say the word "lesbian."

"There is no way I could ever stand here without acknowledging one of the deepest loves of my life, my heroic co-parent, my ex-partner in love but righteous soul sister in life, my confessor, ski buddy, consigliere, most beloved BFF of 20 years, Cydney Bernard. Thank you, Cyd. I am so proud of our modern family."

TRANSLATION: I was in a long-term relationship with a woman, and we have two children together. This is not necessarily news, but it's the first time I've acknowledged her in front of television cameras.

"This feels like the end of one era and the beginning of something else. Scary and exciting and now what? Well, I may never be up on this stage again, on any stage for that matter."

TRANSLATION: It's difficult not to feel you're in some moment of transition when an organization gives you a lifetime achievement award, even if you're only 50 years old.

Harry Styles

Taylor Swift

Brace yourself for another breakup tune

Consider this fair warning, Harry Styles. In the wake of her split from the One Direction member, Taylor Swift posted this ominous message to her Twitter account: "Back in the studio. Uh oh..." Swift has made a career of penning autobiographical tunes of heartbreak, often embarrassing ex-boyfriends like John Mayer and Jake Gyllenhaal. And a Styles number may be a doozy, as Swift was reportedly left heartbroken by the Brit, who dumped her during a Caribbean vacation because he said she's "asexual and wouldn't put out," a source tells Radar Online.

Josh Brolin

Brolin's boyhood was far from boring

Josh Brolin doesn't pull any punches when discussing his rough-and-tumble youth as the son of actor James Brolin, telling Men's Journal that he lost his virginity at 11, joined a surf gang called the Cito Rats and even got involved with heroin. "I was the last (gang member) to get into heroin — I smoked it — and the first to get out. I was around 16 or 17, so it was around the time of the Goonies," Josh tells the magazine. "But I liked working and learning, so it was very difficult for me to lend myself to that drug completely."

Twitter

@TheRealRoseanne
Ben Affleck is a moronic large sweaty headed blowhard.

@EmmaBunton
Wow its snowing where I am, coming down thick and fast!!

@MatthewPerry
This turning down the role of Lincoln is just going to keep kicking my ass isn't it?!?

@OfficialAdele
I just met Daniel f---ing Day Lewis!!!

Kelly Osbourne on losing weight, gaining confidence

Interview. The young starlet speaks to Metro about how she got motivated and transformed her life

ROMINA McGUINNESS
life@metronews.ca

Kelly Osbourne lost 70 pounds and transformed her life. HANDOUT

After appearing on Dancing with the Stars in 2009, you lost 70 pounds, going from a size 14 to a size 2. Which body part were you most excited to rediscover?
For me, because of my family's history with cancer, my mum is always like, have you checked your boobs? One day, I was doing a breast self-examination and found this lump. So I went to the doctor and he said, "Kelly, that's your rib!" I was like, "Oh my God, I have a rib!"

Which part did you go from hating to loving?
My legs. I didn't realize how much muscle I had underneath the fat, and (I have) some pretty toned legs. Now, athletes always come up to me and say, "You've got great legs." Men like big calf muscles on themselves, so when they see it on a girl they like it.

All girls have fat days. How do you cope with yours?
I look at old pictures of myself. I know this sounds really narcissistic, but I don't mean it that way — it helps me see how far I've come and where I don't want to go again. It gives me that kick in the butt to get in the gym or call up a friend and say, "I'm having a fat day."

How do you feel when you see old photos of yourself?
It's a mixture of a million emotions. It makes me feel really sad that I let myself get like that. It was my own doing. I made myself that way because I was scared.

Scared of what?
Of myself and what I was capable of. Being famous for really not doing anything and having the entire world judging you. But now I'm 28 years old and I see it as a learning curve.

Can you imagine some people saying: The new Kelly is boring. There's a lot of stylish, good-looking women out there, so why do we need one more without edge?
I say, "f— you" because if you want to watch a train wreck, there are other Hollywood starlets doing that for you. I want to be a dignified grown-up. I'll always be me. I'm just not an asshole anymore.

Growth spurt

"I got taught proper posture through dancing, yoga and Pilates and I actually grew an inch. I'm now five foot two.
Kelly Osbourne

Bonus round

On her brother Jack

How did you react when you found out your 26-year-old brother, Jack, had multiple sclerosis?
Are you crazy? He's my baby brother, how do you think I reacted? It's like it's not there. He doesn't want to be treated like a sick person, because he's not sick. It's not a death sentence. He's got a very military state of mind so he looks after himself, eats very healthy and works out every day.

Did it affect the way you value life?
I've dealt with my mom almost dying of cancer, my dad almost dying in a bike accident and now my brother has MS. There's nothing they can tell me I can't deal with. It's not like you have a choice, it's life.

She tweeted this during our interview.

Healthwise, does she mean what she tweets?

THE TWEET: #DietMyth Food eaten late at night stops you losing weight!

Really?
It depends what you eat! It should be low carb and sugar.

What's your favourite midnight snack?
I'm addicted to turkey burgers with no bun and hummus.

THE TWEET: "Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself."~ Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Is that what Def Leppard meant by Pour Some Sugar on Me?
I have no idea what Def Leppard meant by that! They probably meant suck my d—.

THE TWEET: I really believe that if you start UR week w/ a positive attitude on Monday it'll be way easier 2 fight off negativity the rest of the week!

But what if I hate my job but can't afford to quit?
Plan something for after work so that you've got something to look forward to.

So what do you do when you leave work?
I'm a homebody. I have no reason to go to clubs, talk to boys and get wasted. My boyfriend cooks dinner and we play board games. Sounds boring, but we have fun because no one's looking at us and I don't wake up to a fake story about me.

Fingerling potatoes with salmon raise profile of apps

ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit
rosereisman.com

Fingerling potatoes are the newest trend for appetizers and side dishes at parties and restaurants.

They're a great twist on the standard potato. Most large supermarkets and fruit and vegetable shops carry fingerlings.

If you can't find them, use small white potatoes for these Fingerling Potatoes with Herbed Cheese and Smoked Salmon.

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F. Line a baking sheet with foil and spray with cooking oil.

2. Slice the fingerling potatoes in half lengthwise and place skin side down on the baking sheet. Spray them with cooking oil. Bake the potatoes approximately 30 minutes or just until they are tender. Place on a serving dish.

3. Using a small food processor or a whisk, mix both the cheeses with the garlic and pepper until smooth. Stir in the dill.

4. Place a dollop of the mixture on top of each potato and sprinkle with the diced salmon. Serve while still hot.

ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN.

Ingredients

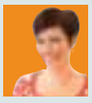
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 30 minutes

- 8 fingerling potatoes
- 2 tbsp light cream cheese
- 3 tbsp goat cheese
- 1/2 tsp crushed garlic
- pinch freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh dill
- 2 oz smoked salmon, diced

This recipe serves eight. LORELLA ZANETTI, FROM ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS)

Health Solutions

Casserole reprise



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert, DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Call it a casserole and it's relegated to the '50s, but call it a "strata" or a "bake" or a "pie" and suddenly it's new again.

The traditional formula is simple: ingredients in a glass dish heated in the oven. The outcome is especially good for sharing at parties or for making on the weekend and enjoying all week.

What could use a little healthy push is the choice of items that go into the dish. Your mom used cans of soup, high carb pasta and maybe some Corn Flakes on top, but we can do better. Here are some substitutions to any casserole recipe.

- Canned lentils or cooked chicken instead of ground beef
- Cook and rinse all meat before adding instead of using ground lamb with fat
- Low fat evaporated milk instead of heavy cream sauce
- Spaghetti squash/quinoa/brown rice instead of pasta
- White sauce made with milk instead of grated cheese
- Baby food pureed vegetables instead of canned soup
- Whole wheat bread crumbs instead of Corn Flake topping
- Crushed whole wheat crackers instead of crispy onions
- Phyllo layers instead of pastry or puff pastry

Every casserole has the same formula: Body of protein, heart of creamy and moist and topping of crisp. Mix and match as you please and serve with a great big salad.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM.

Two-Potato Pancake. Tender meets crispy

1. Fill bowl with ice water. Using medium holes on box grater, grate all potatoes, add to ice water and set aside. Use fine holes on grater to grate onion.

2. Drain potatoes well, squeezing out as much water as possible. In bowl, combine potatoes with onion. Squeeze again to remove as much moisture as possible. To do this, grab mix, a handful at a time, squeeze over the sink and transfer to a dry bowl. When all of mix has been squeezed, add eggs, flour and a bit of salt (start with 1/2 teaspoon.) Mix well and set aside.

3. In a large, deep sauté pan over medium-high, heat about 1/4 inch peanut oil to 360 F. To test oil, drop pinch of flour into oil. If ready, flour should sizzle and brown almost immediately. While oil heats, set wire rack over rimmed baking sheet. Heat oven to 350 F.

4. Working in batches and using 3 tablespoons of potato mix per pancake, drop batter into oil. Do not crowd pan. Flatten each with spatula and fry for 4 mins. per side, or until golden and crisp. As you fry, you may need to add oil to pan. Return to temperature between batches and additions of oil.

5. As pancakes finish, transfer to wire rack. Once all pancakes are fried, place them (rack and baking sheet) in oven and heat 5 mins., or until warmed through. To serve, sprinkle lightly with salt and accompany with sour cream and applesauce. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ELIZABETH KARMEL, GRILLING AND SOUTHERN FOODS EXPERT AND AUTHOR OF SOAKED, SLATHERED AND SEASONED.

Ingredients

- 2 lbs baking potatoes (such as russet), peeled
- 1 medium sweet potato (about 1/2 lb), peeled
- 1 small yellow onion
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- Kosher or sea salt
- Peanut oil, for frying
- Sour cream, to serve
- Applesauce, to serve

Sweet potatoes and kale: A match made in heaven

1. Heat the oven to 400 F.

2. Remove outer layer of papery skin from heads of garlic. Slice off 1/4 inch from narrow end of each. Place each, cut side up, on square of heavy-duty foil. Drizzle with olive oil then sprinkle with salt. Wrap foil loosely up and over garlic heads, roast 1 hour. Remove and let cool.

3. Meanwhile, prick sweet potatoes with fork, then rub with oil. Add to oven and bake for 50 to 60 minutes, or until tender.

Ingredients

- 3 heads garlic
- Olive oil
- Kosher salt
- 4 large sweet potatoes
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter, room temperature
- Pinch dried sage
- 1 large shallot, chopped
- 1 bunch (5 oz) baby kale
- 1/2 cup grated fontina cheese
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 to 1 cup shredded white cheddar or Gruyère cheese
- 3 tbsp toasted pumpkin seeds (optional)
- Roasted chicken (optional)

4. Once garlic has cooled enough to handle, remove cloves from skins. Most efficient way to do this is to squeeze whole head from bottom. In food processor, combine garlic, butter, sage and a pinch of salt, then pulse until chopped and combined. Set aside.

5. 15 minutes before potatoes have finished, in a medium sauté pan over medium-high, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add the shallot and sauté until soft, about 4 minutes. Add the kale, and sauté for a few minutes, stirring constantly, until tender. Set aside.

6. When potatoes have finished baking, remove them from the oven and let them cool until easy to touch. Leave the oven on. Cut the potatoes lengthwise down the middle and scoop out about half of the flesh from each, making sure to keep a thick layer of sweet potato within the skin so that it can stand on its own.

This recipe serves eight. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

7. In bowl, mash sweet potato, roasted garlic mixture and fontina cheese. Season with salt and pepper.

8. Divide filling between each potato, spooning it into the shell of each. Top with shredded cheese, hot sautéed kale.

9. Arrange the potatoes on a baking sheet and return to the oven until hot, about 15 minutes. They also can be microwaved for 2 minutes. Serve hot, garnished with pumpkin seeds and chicken, if desired. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ELIZABETH KARMEL, A GRILLING AND SOUTHERN FOODS EXPERT AND AUTHOR OF SOAKED, SLATHERED AND SEASONED.

Avoid boasting

Self praise is no praise

CHARLES THE BUTLER
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For more, visit charlesmacpherson.com

Earlier this month I was having lunch at a little café in Toronto when a group of four men and two women sat down beside us. Everyone at that table was in a good mood, and as a young group in their late 20s, were enjoying an extended lunch break from work.

What surprised me was how the four men were trying to impress the two ladies, with each gentleman trying to outdo the other with stories of his family Christmas and the extravagant gifts he received.

None of the men in the group seemed to be paying any attention to the women, who couldn't have cared less about the boasting.

The ladies were rolling their eyes amongst themselves.

So as the holiday season comes to an end and we start a fresh, clean new year, remember to think and be aware of others around you when you speak. Sadly, these four men were not impressing the ladies. In fact, they did the opposite. So when speaking at an office luncheon, talk about relevant and fun things.

Just don't draw needless attention to yourself.

Expect lots of eye rolling if you openly boast. ISTOCK

Cupid puts the microscope on your horoscope — are you the shy type, the sugar baby or the romantic?

What does 2013 hold for your love life? ISTOCK

See what your star sign says about you. Online dating site Match.com conducts survey to reveal what 2013 may hold for you depending on your astrological identity

Online dating website Match.com recently conducted a survey to see what 2013 may hold for your love life based on your astrological sign.

It estimates more than one third (36 per cent) of single Canadians will make a New Year's Resolution to go on more dates this year.

So what does your sign reveal about the year ahead? Here is the site's findings.

Capricorn: The office romantic
Capricorns are most likely to date someone from their workplace. Sixteen per cent of Capricorn singles have dated someone from the office in the last five years, the highest of any sign.

Aquarius: The sugar baby
Age is just a number for Aquarius, who are the most likely to date someone more than 10 years their senior. A whopping 56 per cent would date someone who is more than a decade older than them.

Pisces: The romantic
Pisces are the most romantic of all signs. An outstanding 66 per cent of Pisces believe in love at first sight.

Aries: The initiator
When it comes to who should pay for a first date, Aries singles are in agreement. Fifty-three per cent believe the person who initiated the date should pay, more than any other sign.

Taurus: The shy type
Taurus singles are the shiest of the signs, with only eight per cent having asked someone out on a date in the last year.

Gemini: The long distance lover
When it comes to romance, Gemini singles are prepared to go the distance. An overwhelming 54 per cent have had a long distance relationship, more than any other sign.

Cancer: The multitasker
If you're dating a Cancer, be prepared to have "the talk" sooner rather than later. While not necessarily ones to cheat, at least one in 10 Cancer singles (11 per cent) date two to three people at the same time. Talk about a scheduling challenge!

Leo: The Facebook updater
It's not official until it's on Facebook! At least according to Leo singles, who are most likely to update their relationship status on the social networking site. Nearly one quarter (21 per cent) report or update their relationship status regularly.

Virgo: The online dater
When it comes to embracing technologies to improve their love life, Virgo singles are most likely to bite the bullet. Nearly half (47 per cent) have used an online dating site.

Libra: The good time
If you're dating a Libra, prepare to imbibe. Libra singles are most likely to drink alcohol on a first date – 74 per cent will have a boozy beverage on a first night out.

Scorpio: The canine cuddler
Are you a dog lover? Then date a Scorpio! Singles with this sign are most likely to be friends to canines. Sixty-three per cent are fans of these furry fellows.

Sagittarius: The sharer
If you're dating a Sagittarius, the odds are your ears should be burning about now. More than a third (36 per cent) of Sagittarians will discuss their dating life with friends and family, bring others out as wingmen or discuss their dating life goals with a group. METRO/MATCH.COM

Make 12 money vows for 2013

Alison on Money.
Having trouble keeping financial resolutions? Join the club

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

It's all about the psychology. Twelve months is a long time to keep a money vow. However, if you're only aiming for a month, chances of success are higher, which increases the likelihood that you'll turn some of your mini-resolutions into habits.

Try these on for size in 2013.

January: Find 30 minutes
Devote half an hour a week to your financial affairs. Eliminate distractions and focus.

February: Read a statement
Spend this month getting familiar with your RRSP. Ask questions of your advisor if you don't understand the financial products you hold.

March: Keep a log
Trust me, you have no idea what you really spend. List every last penny in a journal.

April: Set aside
When your tax refund arrives, save some of it in a six-month GIC for the holiday season.

May: Cut it out
Pick a spending habit and toss it for 30 days. If it is food related, say a daily double double and donut, you'll drop a bit of weight too in time for beach weather.

June: Cut it down
With the better weather arriving, consider reducing your cable package.

July: Try shank's mare
Walk everywhere you can. This is harder in the burbs, but rethink your driving habits to save gas and whittle the waist.

August: Donate
During the dog days of summer, pick a charity and set up a monthly donation, much easier than a last minute lump sum.

September: Get educated
Go to Investor Education Fund, (getsmarteraboutmoney.ca), Credit Canada (creditcanada.com) or Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, (fcac-acfc.gc.ca) for great tools and unbiased information.

October: Check it out
Get your credit report and score from equifax.ca or transunion.ca.

November: Stay home
Axe the restaurant, prepared foods and take out habit.

December: You're almost there
Make a list of all you've accomplished financially this year and feel good about yourself.

Customize your own 2013 resolution list and you're sure to stay financially engaged all year round. Happy New Year's to all my readers!

Contact Alison at griffiths.alison@gmail.com or alisongriffiths.ca

Stick to your financial resolutions this year by making manageable goals. ISTOCK IMAGES

To consolidate debt or grin and bear it?

FUN AND FRUGAL
Lesley Scorgie
money@metronews.ca

Besides goals of better eating and weight loss, debt is top of mind for most North Americans this January. Make debt repayment a 2013 goal!

How much do you owe? To whom? What interest rate? Can you afford the payments?

The choice is yours — should you tough debt repayment out the old-fashioned way (regular payments to multiple lenders) or apply for a consolidation loan (one consolidated payment to one lender).

The benefits of a consolidation loan are that the interest rates are typically lower than the combined interest rates of multiple debts, which often consist of high interest credit cards. As such, the monthly payments can be lower.

However, many experts rail against consolidation loans because they don't teach a valuable lesson: Taking full responsibility for debt accumulation.

The act of having to pay off expensive debts the old-fashioned way often imposes enough financial hardship on a person that they change their spending habits.

Canadian statistics show that the majority of individuals with consolidation loans never learn their lesson and are first in line for another one when the previous is finished.

You're a good candidate for a consolidation loan if you are paying too much in interest or if you can't keep up with regular payments.

The first caveat however, is that you must be financially disciplined and commit to making payments on time, in full and not accumulating additional debts. The second is that these loans are difficult to qualify for as most people that are "maxed out" are considered high risk.

Many Canadians turn to lines of credit as pseudo-consolidation loans. Scary!

Though interest rates are attractive, lines of credit are revolving, thus the available borrowing room never decreases. Rarely do Canadians pay off their lines of credit. Rather, they continue to overspend using their line of credit, often decreasing home equity. If you use a line of credit to consolidate, reduce the borrowing limit as you pay it down.

If the temptation to spend is too great or you can't qualify for a lower interest loan, repay your debt the old-fashioned way.

On a spreadsheet, list who you owe money to, the interest rate and balance. Call each lender and negotiate a better rate. Each month, pay a little extra on the highest interest debt until it's paid off.

Then pay extra on the next highest interest debt. Remember, you'll have extra money from your previous debt's regular payment.

Follow Lesley on Twitter @LesleyScorgie

Don't let debt blow you away! ISTOCK IMAGES

Anaheim Ducks Ryan Getzlaf, left, and Corey Perry are facing the possibility of being split up in free agency this summer after spending nearly their whole professional careers playing together. HARRY HOW/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Ducks duo hope this isn't their swan song

NHL. Perry, Getzlaf prepare for season knowing unrestricted free agency lies ahead

Corey Perry and Ryan Getzlaf have played together in almost every game of their careers with the Anaheim Ducks, usually on the same line. Perry won an NHL MVP award, Getzlaf became the Ducks' captain, and they raised the Stanley Cup together.

With unrestricted free agency looming for both forwards this summer, they don't know what they're heading into during what could be their final few months together.

Yet former London Knights star Perry and Getzlaf expressed no concern about their contract status when the Ducks opened training camp Sunday. They're determined to stay focused on fixing the Ducks, who missed the post-season last year.

"Obviously, I don't have a time frame on it, but we'd like to get something done if we can," Getzlaf said. "If both parties are wanting to do that, then it'll get done."

Anaheim general manager Bob Murray opened camp by affirming his strong desire to re-sign Perry, the goal-scoring member of the tandem, and Getzlaf, the Ducks' top playmaker. Anaheim drafted the forwards together in the first round in 2003 and nurtured their emergence.

"It's my top priority," Murray said. "They've been Anaheim Ducks from the start. I love those guys."

Growing up Ducks

Perry and Getzlaf progressed through the Ducks' system together and joined the big club during the 2005-06 season before winning a Stanley Cup in 2007.

But Murray realizes both sides must make tough decisions. While Getzlaf and Perry decide whether they're willing to risk personal upheaval by waiting for unrestricted free agency, the Ducks must figure out how much they're willing to spend on two 27-year-old forwards with top-level talent and disappointing recent results.

Perry won the Hart Trophy award in 2011 with 98 points and a league-best 50 goals, but his production fell to 37 goals and 60 points last season. Getzlaf struggled with injuries during part of Perry's MVP campaign, and he returned last season with 57 points and a career-low 11 goals in the worst full season of his NHL career.

Yet even the declining numbers probably wouldn't stop somebody from signing both players to huge contracts. The Ducks aren't eager to risk losing two of their most valuable properties: Both forwards' representatives are scheduled to visit Murray in Anaheim in the near future for contract talks.

"There's no time frame," Perry said. "Whatever happens, happens. I'm not going to be thinking about it. It's not going to be in the front of my mind. I have a job here to do first, and that's to go out and play hockey and help this team win."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL

Chiefs' Belcher legally drunk at time of murder-suicide: Report

Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Jovan Belcher had a blood-alcohol level more than twice the legal limit when he shot his girlfriend nine times and then killed himself, an autopsy released Monday showed.

The Jackson County Medical Examiner report on Belcher, 25, raised new questions about whether police should have done more before the Dec. 1 murder-suicide. Officers found Belcher sleeping in his car about five hours earlier, but let him go.

At the time of the autopsy, Belcher's BAC was 0.17, more than twice the limit of 0.08 per cent for Missouri drivers, and it was likely higher when he shot girlfriend Kasandra Perkins, 22, at the couple's Kansas City home.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

Centre-fielder Rasmus signs 1-year deal with Blue Jays

The Toronto Blue Jays have avoided salary arbitration with centre-fielder Colby Rasmus, signing the 26-year-old to a one-year contract worth $4.675 million.

Colby Rasmus GETTY IMAGES FILE

Rasmus hit 23 home runs in 2012 — tying his career high — but also posted a career-worst .223 batting average and .289 on-base percentage.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Armstrong opens up to Oprah on PEDs: Source

A person familiar with the situation said Lance Armstrong admitted to using performance-enhancing drugs during his cycling career in Monday's interview with Oprah Winfrey. The episode will air Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Lance Armstrong confessed to Oprah Winfrey during an interview Monday that he used performance-enhancing drugs to win the Tour de France, a person familiar with the situation told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the interview is to be broadcast Thursday on Winfrey's network.

Armstrong was stripped of all seven Tour titles last year following a U.S. Anti-Doping Agency report that portrayed him as a ruthless competitor, willing to go to any lengths to win the prestigious race.

Livestrong meeting

Armstrong stopped at the Livestrong Foundation, which he founded, on his way to the interview and said "I'm sorry" to staff members.

- A person with knowledge of that session said Armstrong choked up and several employees cried during the visit.

After a federal investigation of the cyclist was dropped without charges being brought last year, USADA stepped in with an investigation of its own. The agency deposed 11 former teammates and accused Armstrong of masterminding a complex and brazen drug program that included steroids, blood boosters and a range of other performance-enhancers.

A group of about 10 close friends and advisers to Armstrong left a downtown Austin, Texas, hotel about three hours after they arrived Monday afternoon for the taping.

Soon afterward, Winfrey tweeted: "Just wrapped with @lancearmstrong More than 2 1/2 hours. He came READY!"

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

Horoscopes

Aries
March 21 - April 20
Only you know how much effort you have put into a task of some kind, so don't let anyone tell you that you should have done more. In a matter of days, your confidence will receive a much-needed boost. You're doing OK.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
If you are serious about a long-term goal then you need to get working on it right now. Even relationships must take a back seat while you make your mark. A job done well will bring you satisfaction.

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Your confidence will bloom today and everyone will be impressed by your dynamic manner. In fact, the higher you aim over the next few days, the more likely it is you will succeed. Don't hold back.

Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Cosmic activity in your opposite sign of Capricorn indicates that major changes are possible, but you must be the one who makes the first move. Yes, mistakes have been made but things are not as bad as they seem.

Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If you feel the need to open up about your feelings, now is the time because you are guaranteed a positive response. In fact, you will be surprised how easy it is to confide in people and how readily they confide in you.

Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Today's beneficial aspects will reveal new possibilities and make you realize that you have been worrying for no good reason. Chances are you will soon be made the proverbial offer you simply cannot refuse.

Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
The higher you aim, the more you will accomplish and the more you accomplish, the more you will feel good about yourself. Success and popularity are yours for the taking. It doesn't get much better than this.

Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Don't sit at home thinking about what might have been. Get out there into the world and do something dynamic. The next few days are going to be crucial to your emotional and mental wellbeing, so be positive.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Cosmic activity in the money area of your chart urges you to try something new, especially if you are not getting as much as you would like from your career. You need to be more adventurous. Is that so hard?

Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You can now start moving forward again after a period when you seemed to chop and change and get nowhere. Be brave, be bold and be ready to travel in a new direction over the next few days.

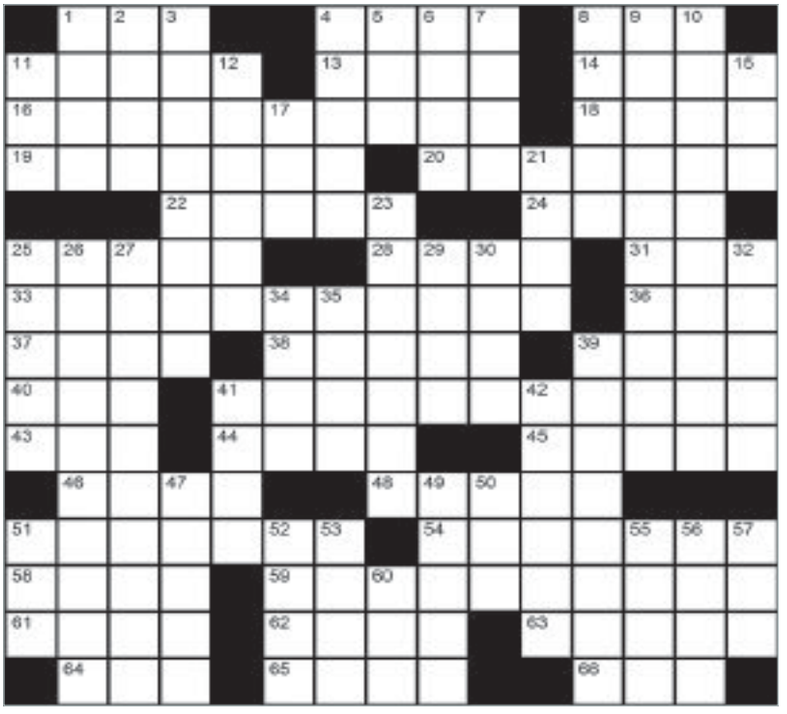
Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Believe it or not it is impossible for you to fail. So, the more risks you take now, the more you will achieve. Aim to be the best at what it is you do best. Anything is possible if you want it enough.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may be of the opinion that if you talk tough, you will get what you want. But why risk alienating people when you can just as easily charm them? Say nice things and you will get nice things in return.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across & Down

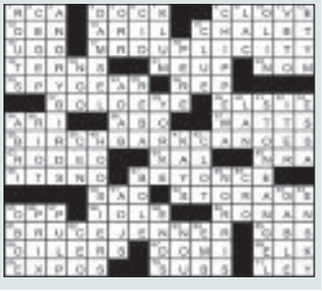
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Great __ Sea
4. __ Breton Island
8. Sleeve
11. Charles Dickens character Edwin
13. Russian river
14. Arctic explorer John, and others
16. Nanaimo-born jazz pianist/singer: 2 wds.
18. Ship's mooring post
19. Ivy's 'grasper'
20. Brickwork
22. Fay of 1933's "King Kong", and others
24. Bread spread
25. Try
28. Director Mr. Preminger
31. Car advertisement fig.
33. Vancouver's urban oasis: 2 wds.
36. Certain ISP
37. Alan of "M*A*S*H"
38. Actress Christine
39. Farm tower
40. Family member
41. Twitter and Facebook: 2 wds.
43. Cobbler's tool
44. Boost
45. Nautical "Stop!"
46. French Polynesia island
48. Panorama
51. "The Flintstones" setting
54. Paris Hilton, for one
58. Organic compound
59. Ancient Roman greeting: 2 wds.
61. Wile E. Coyote's supplier
62. River of Florence
63. Elegance
64. Poetic nightfall
65. Church section
66. Comedy venue, __ Yuk's

Down
1. Soft cheese
2. Welsh actor Mr. Gruffudd
3. 'Ultimate Dinosaurs: Giants from __' at the Royal Ontario Museum
4. Like permed hair
5. Southern constellation near Telescopium
6. "Gilligan's Island" tree
7. "__ Enchanted" (2004)
8. Tree: Spanish
9. Chantal Kreviazuk's hubby: 2 wds.
10. Superman's city
11. Banned pesticide
12. Hockey great Mr. Sittler
15. Farm pen
17. Car company
21. CBC Radio One host, __-Yin Lee
23. Meryl Streep movie, "__ Choice" (1982)
25. Carne __ (Mexican dish)
26. The __. __ Seaway
27. Calgary Flames rink
29. Brit's bye-bye
30. Set of three books, for short
32. Crow
34. H.G. Wells people
35. Chatter, variantly
39. In a harsh way
41. "Begone!"
42. "Flashdance" (1983) song
47. "Over the Rainbow" co-composer Harold
49. Ms. Sevigny
50. Common Market letters
51. Princess Eugenie's sis
52. Canadian figure skater Patrick
53. Ex-Idol judge Ms. DioGuardi
55. Biblical twin
56. Regina's prov.
57. Jr.s' fathers
60. Bill, for short

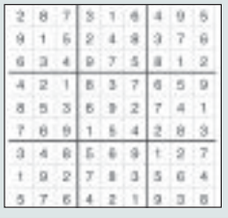
Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku



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